

MANHATTAN PROJECT II
Physicians for Social Responsibility
1000 16th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036
202-785-3777

July 23, 1992

Dear Senator:

We continue to believe that a comprehensive test ban is in the best interests of the United States and all the other countries of the world.

The advantages of an immediate mutual moratorium and of a comprehensive test ban outweigh, in our judgment, any perceived benefits of further tests for any reason.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Owen Chamberlain
Dr. Bernard Feld
Dr. Carson Mark
Dr. Philip Morrison
Dr. Joseph Rotblat
Dr. Glenn Seaborg
Dr. Herbert York
Dr. Victor Weisskopf

The above signers [see backgrounds, over] all worked as scientists in the Manhattan Project which led to the first test of a nuclear weapon on July 16, 1945

Background of signers (for identification purposes only)

Dr. Owen Chamberlain, Nobel Laureate, Emeritus Professor of Physics, University of California, worked on the properties of plutonium in the Manhattan Project.

Dr. Bernard Feld, Emeritus Professor of Physics, MIT, was the principal assistant to Leo Szilard and assistant to Enrico Fermi from beginning to end of the Manhattan Project.

Dr. Carson Mark, who joined the Manhattan Project shortly before the Trinity test, later succeeded Dr. Hans Bethe as Head of the Theoretical Physics Division at Los Alamos.

Dr. Philip Morrison, Institute Professor Emeritus, MIT, was in charge of nuclear assembly of the bomb for the Trinity test at Alamogordo and, on Tinian Island, for the Nagasaki bomb.

Dr. Joseph Rotblat, Emeritus Professor of Physics, University of London, was one of the earliest researchers of the feasibility of atomic bombs in England before the formation of the Manhattan Project, which he later joined.

Dr. Glenn Seaborg, Nobel Laureate, Associate Director at Large, Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory, first synthesized and identified plutonium, first demonstrated the fissionability of plutonium-239 and, in the Manhattan Project, worked out the chemical methods for its large-scale separation, was Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission under Presidents Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon.

Dr. Herbert York, Emeritus Professor of Physics, University of California, worked on the Manhattan Project at Berkeley and Oak Ridge, was the first Director of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and later headed the U.S. delegation conducting negotiations for a Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban under President Carter.

For any inquiries, call Manhattan Project II, Physicians for Social Responsibility, 202-785-3777.

DANIEL ELLSBERG--Background

Daniel Ellsberg is a former Defense and State Department official and RAND Corporation analyst who in 1969 released the Pentagon Papers--a top secret history of US decisionmaking on Vietnam--to the Senate and, in 1971, to the New York Times and other newspapers. Federal charges brought against him were dismissed in 1973 on grounds of governmental misconduct, which figured in the convictions of a number of White House aides and in the impeachment proceedings against President Nixon which led to Nixon's resignation.

Prior to his involvement in Vietnam, and again after the war ended, Ellsberg's full-time preoccupation was reducing the danger of nuclear war: the focus of the present campaign, Manhattan Project II.

Immediately after joining the RAND Corporation--a nonprofit research institute doing classified analysis for the Defense Department--in 1959, Ellsberg began research into problems of nuclear command and control, including the risks of accidental or unauthorized detonation of nuclear weapons and dangers associated with Presidential delegation of authority over nuclear weapons. He became perhaps uniquely knowledgeable, for a civilian, with respect to nuclear war plans, and in 1961 he was assigned, as a consultant to the Secretary of Defense, to draft the Kennedy Administration's guidance to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the operational plans for general nuclear war.

After participating as a consultant to working groups under the Executive Committee of the National Security Committee (EXCOMM) during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, Ellsberg became sole researcher in 1964 on a highly classified interdepartmental study of nuclear crises, including the Cuban crisis.

In August 1964 he was given the opportunity to continue this study of crisis decisionmaking from the inside, as Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, with the rank of GS-18 (the highest Civil Service "supergrade," the civilian equivalent of Lieutenant General). He was to work almost entirely on Vietnam decisionmaking, starting on August 4, 1964--the day of the supposed attack in the Tonkin Gulf followed by the first US air attacks on North Vietnam--and proceeding through the decisions on escalation over the next year.

In August 1965 he volunteered to go to Vietnam, for which he transferred to the State Department (FSR-1, same rank) as a member of an interdepartmental Senior Liaison Office under Major General (ret) Edward Lansdale (who, before his retirement, had been a senior CIA official). In Vietnam Ellsberg analyzed and evaluated the "pacification" process, whereby the Saigon regime sought to extend its military control and governmental authority in the countryside. This took him to 38 of the 43 provinces of Vietnam over the next two years, including, especially in 1967,

participation in frontline combat as a civilian observer (drawing on his training in the Fifties as a Marine infantry officer). In 1967 he became Special Assistant to the Deputy Ambassador, with the responsibility of evaluating progress in pacification (which, he reported, was nil).

After contracting hepatitis in the field, Ellsberg returned to the States and the RAND Corporation in June, 1967. He was one of the first researchers to be asked to work on a study of US involvement in Vietnam which became known as the McNamara Study--officially "The History of U.S. Decision-making in Vietnam, 1945-68"--or later, after he released it, as the Pentagon Papers. By 1969 he was the sole researcher authorized to possess and analyze the entire 43-volume, 7000-page Top Secret study for purposes of "learning lessons from Vietnam." Knowing, in the fall of 1969, that some of the worst aspect of this history of secret escalation were about to be repeated under a new administration, and believing that Congress needed to learn certain lessons as well as the Executive, he copied and gave the entire study to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee under Senator Fulbright, and eventually--after invasions of Cambodia and Laos had ensued--to 17 newspapers in June, 1971. For this he faced federal charges totalling a possible 115 years in prison.

After charges had been dismissed because of criminal misconduct against him by President Nixon and his top aides," after Nixon's resignation and the ending of the war, Ellsberg returned to his main concern prior to 1964, preventing nuclear war: this time outside the government. Since 1975 he has conducted research, lectured widely, and participated in the antinuclear movement. He was, for example, one of the originators of the Mobilization for Survival and one of the earliest supporters of the movement for a bilateral nuclear weapons freeze, later serving several years on the Strategy Task Force of the national Freeze Campaign.

Ellsberg is a Senior Research Associate of the Center for Psychological Studies in the Nuclear Age*, Harvard Medical School. In recent years he has had research grants from the John T. and Catherine D. MacArthur Foundation and a number of other sources for research on the risks of the nuclear era and the possibilities for ending it.

Born in Chicago in 1931, Ellsberg grew up in Detroit, where he was a scholarship student at Cranbrook School, Bloomfield Hills, graduating valedictorian with a Pepsi Cola Scholarship to Harvard. He earned a B.A. (summa cum laude Phi Beta Kappa) and Ph.D. (in Economics) from Harvard, and was a member of the Society of Fellows, Harvard University (1957-59). In the mid-50's he served as rifle company commander in the U.S. Marine Corps, extending service for a year to take part with his battalion in the Suez Crisis, 1956. He lives with his wife and son, the youngest of three children, at 90 Norwood Ave., Kensington, California, 94707.

* Now the Center for Psychology and Social Change.